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Introduction

The old adage “practice makes perfect” can really hold true for children and their education. The more practice students have with concepts being taught in school, the more success they are likely to find. For many parents, knowing how to achieve this goal and support their child’s learning can be frustrating. This book is designed to eliminate the guesswork for parents using it at home, while also being a valuable resource for educators using it in the classroom.

Here’s how: By pairing page-long texts in three different categories (fiction, nonfiction, and informational) with comprehension questions, students will get practice in encountering different text types and showing that they fully understand what they have read.

For Grade 5, *Practice Makes Perfect: Reading Comprehension* covers the following skills:

- using various reading strategies to comprehend text
- using context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words
- skimming text to quickly locate information
- locating the main idea of a text as a whole or of a part (paragraph, etc.) of a text
- making inferences and predictions based on information given

Inside This Resource

Reading Passages and Comprehension Questions (pages 4–39) — There are 18 reading passages that have been divided into three categories: fiction, nonfiction, and informational. These passages can be read sequentially or can be done out of order, as needed.

Practice Tests (pages 40–45) — There are 3 practice tests, one each for fiction, nonfiction, and informational texts.

Answer Sheets (pages 46–47) — These optional sheets provide a similar format to those found on standardized tests. These “bubble-in” answer sheets can be used in the classroom or at home.

Answer Key (page 48) — This key provides the answers for all of the comprehension questions that accompany the passages.

Helpful Tips

- Establish consistency by setting up a certain time of day to work on these practice pages. Look for times in your day or week that are less hectic and more conducive to practicing skills.
- Keep practice sessions short, positive, and constructive. If your child becomes frustrated, set the book aside and look for another time to practice.
- Provide extra guidance and support in the areas in which your child is struggling. Look for ways to apply these skills to real-life situations.

Name: _____

Great-Grandpa's Plane

Grandpa showed the newspaper picture to Ursula. "This plane is on tour, and it's coming to town this weekend. Would you like to go with me on Saturday to see it?" he asked. Ursula looked at the picture of the B-17 bomber that he had shown her. She looked back up at her grandfather. She didn't see him get this excited very often.

"Okay, Grandpa, I'll go," she said, with a smile.

On their way out to see the plane that Saturday, Grandpa told Ursula all about his dad's experiences during the war. He shared with her the stories he had been told by his father.

Great-Grandpa Gene had been stationed in England during the early years of World War II. He had piloted a B-17 and had flown missions 200 miles into Germany. The planes back then weren't pressurized or heated. There were big openings on the sides for the gun operators, so it was very cold when they were in the air. The crew had to wear heavy flight suits that were lined with sheepskin. These missions were also very dangerous because German anti-aircraft guns on the ground would try to shoot the American planes out of the air. The anti-aircraft fire would often pound the air around the planes for the entire time they were over Germany. It would not stop until they were over the North Sea again and on their way home.

When Ursula and her grandpa got out of the car, they saw the plane immediately. The bright sun reflected off the round body of the B-17 and the broad surfaces of its wings. Glass covered the nose, and long gun barrels pointed out at sharp angles from holes in the body.

Ursula thought the plane was impressive, but she also thought it was not very large. She had seen jumbo jets and big cargo planes at airports in the past. She couldn't imagine how this craft that was one-third the size of a 747 could have carried all those bombs and flown so far. It looked dangerous just to get inside it.

After walking around the plane once, Ursula walked over to a short ladder that led into the belly of the craft. Once inside, she had to stoop over so she wouldn't hit her head. After Grandpa had pulled himself into the plane behind her, the two of them climbed up into the pilot's and co-pilot's seats. Grandpa showed Ursula the instruments, just like his dad had shown him. She saw the airspeed indicator, the vertical speed indicator, and the artificial horizon. Grandpa explained that there had to be two gauges, one on each side of the cockpit. This was so both the pilot and co-pilot could fly the plane if necessary.

"The planes were pretty simple compared to today's planes," Grandpa explained. "There were no computers or radar. They were amazingly tough, though. Even though Great-Grandpa's plane often got beat up by the anti-aircraft fire, it brought him home every time."

When they got back to the car, Ursula gave her grandpa a big hug. He looked at her and asked, "What was that for?"

"For showing me part of our family's life. The stories Great-Grandpa used to tell make more sense to me now. I understand a little more what it was like for him in the war so long ago."

Name: _____

Great-Grandpa's Plane

After reading the passage, answer the questions. Fill in the bubble beside each correct answer.

1. Why did Ursula and her grandpa go to see the B-17 bomber?
 - (A) Ursula's grandpa had always wanted to see one.
 - (B) Ursula was learning about World War II in school.
 - (C) Ursula was very interested in war planes.
 - (D) Ursula's great-grandpa flew a B-17 in World War II.

2. Why did the B-17 crew wear heavy flight suits?
 - (A) The plane had openings that let really cold air into the plane.
 - (B) The crew needed extra padding in case of a crash.
 - (C) All uniforms back then were heavy and thick.
 - (D) World War II took place only during winter months.

3. What reason does the story give for why the B-17 was a simple plane?
 - (A) The planes needed to be light so they could be very fast.
 - (B) The soldiers who flew the planes were not trained pilots.
 - (C) A lot of the equipment you would expect on a plane hadn't been invented at that time.
 - (D) These planes needed to be built very quickly and cheaply.

4. What can the reader tell about Ursula's grandfather?
 - (A) He wished he hadn't taken Ursula to see the plane.
 - (B) He was happy to see the B-17 and think about the stories he knew.
 - (C) He was sad to see the B-17 and to think about the stories he knew.
 - (D) He did not care much about seeing the B-17 plane.

5. Which of the following is an opinion in this story?
 - (A) "These missions were also very dangerous."
 - (B) "There had to be two gauges, one on each side of the cockpit."
 - (C) "It looked dangerous just to get inside it."
 - (D) "She had to stoop over so she wouldn't hit her head."

6. Information in the story suggests that
 - (A) Ursula will grow up to be a pilot like her great-grandfather.
 - (B) Ursula's interest in B-17 bombers started before she was shown one.
 - (C) Her great-grandpa's war stories were more confusing before she saw the B-17.
 - (D) Grandpa will take Ursula's younger brother to see the B-17 one day.

Name: _____

Birth of an Island

Islands aren't born very often. Sometimes islands are created when a volcano erupts below the surface of the ocean. The lava cools and builds the volcano up. When the volcano gets tall enough, it pokes through the surface of the ocean. In the Atlantic Ocean, both Iceland and the Canary Islands were formed this way. Some islands, like Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean, are still being formed!

In 1963, a crew on a fishing boat was present when one island was being born. Early one morning the boat was sailing near the coast of Iceland. The crew awoke to what smelled like rotten eggs. No one knew what the source of the smell was. Suddenly, the boat began rocking back and forth. The sea began to boil like a pot of dark stew. Smoke started to rise out of the water. An underwater volcano was erupting right in front of their eyes!

The captain and his crew moved the vessel and watched from a distance. The volcano spit rock and lava into the air. It looked like the sky was raining rocks. The volcano erupted for days.

Eventually, the fires burned themselves out. The top of the volcano was sticking up out of the ocean. When the lava on top of the volcano cooled, a new island sat where only water had been before.

Scientists were very excited because they had never seen a brand-new island. The scientists named the new island Surtsey, after the Icelandic god of fire. It was the perfect name for such a fiery island.

But the new island did not look much like other islands. It was only a pile of bare rock. There were no plants or animals on it. Scientists wondered how life would come to an empty island. They set up camp and watched and waited. Finally, after many months, a single plant began growing on the rocks.

Scientists found that birds would often land on the island and drop plant materials that had been trapped in their feathers and claws. Sometimes, the birds would drop seeds and a plant would begin to grow.

Today, there are a lot of birds and plants living on Surtsey. Humans are not allowed to go there except for a few scientists. The island is protected so that it can be studied. Surtsey is the perfect place to learn how plants and animals spread to new places on Earth.



Name: _____

Birth of an Island

After reading the passage, answer the questions. Fill in the bubble beside each correct answer.

1. To what does the author compare the sea when the underwater volcano erupted?
 - (A) a pot of stew
 - (B) raining rocks
 - (C) the god of fire
 - (D) rotten eggs

2. How was Surtsey formed?
 - (A) A volcano erupted below the surface of the ocean.
 - (B) Birds dropped plant material in the same spot.
 - (C) The sky rained rocks until it was formed.
 - (D) The Icelandic god of fire created it.

3. Why is it important to study Surtsey?
 - (A) Underwater volcanoes have never erupted before.
 - (B) Scientists can learn how plants and animals spread to new places.
 - (C) Humans are not allowed to go there.
 - (D) Scientists have never studied a volcanic island before.

4. Which best describes the scientists's feelings when they first visited the new island?
 - (A) scared
 - (B) confident
 - (C) excited
 - (D) upset

5. What is the likely reason why the new island was named after a god of fire?
 - (A) The island has many forest fires.
 - (B) The island began as a pile of rocks.
 - (C) The island gets extremely hot in the summer.
 - (D) The island was made by an erupting volcano.

6. What is the main reason humans are *not* allowed on the island?
 - (A) They would hunt the animals that live there.
 - (B) The animals that live there would hunt them.
 - (C) They would change how the plants and animals came to be on the island.
 - (D) They would be in danger from another erupting volcano.

Name: _____

Late Fees

While looking through the junk closet, Rhea and her mom found an old videocassette of a film that was popular in the late 1980s. The videocassette was in a box, and there was a folded flyer tucked inside that box. Rhea’s mom unfolded it, and her mouth fell open as she read it.

Modern Times Video
Your Place for Video Rentals since 1986

Daily Rental Fees

New Releases	\$2.49/day
Classic Favorites	\$1.99/day
Manager’s Special	\$1.49/day
Community Education	Complimentary

- Late Fees will accrue in accordance with daily rates.
- Movies due in store by 6:00 PM on due day. Those returned after 6:00 PM will be charged late fees.

Videos for Sale

New Releases	Price as marked
Used (Orange Sticker)	50% off original price
Used (Blue Sticker)	25% off original price
Used (Yellow Sticker)	10% off original price



Rhea’s mom said, “Oops” as she folded the flyer and stuck it back in the box.

“What is this thing?” Rhea said as she looked at the videocassette. “Does anybody even have a machine that could play this anymore?”

Name: _____

Late Fees

After reading the passage, answer the questions. Fill in the bubble beside each correct answer.

1. What does a yellow sticker on a video mean?
 - (A) The price is as marked.
 - (B) The price is 50% off the original price.
 - (C) The price is 25% off the original price.
 - (D) The price is 10% off the original price.
2. What is the likely meaning of the word *accrue* as it is used in the flyer?
 - (A) increase
 - (B) decrease
 - (C) decline
 - (D) reduce
3. If someone had \$10.00 to spend, how many “Classic Favorites” could they have rented from this video store?
 - (A) 4
 - (B) 5
 - (C) 6
 - (D) 10
4. What is the likely meaning of the word *complimentary* as it is used in the flyer?
 - (A) saying something nice about someone
 - (B) late
 - (C) free
 - (D) similar
5. What is the likely reason why Rhea’s mom says “Oops” near the end of the story?
 - (A) because she dropped the videocassette
 - (B) because she dropped the flyer
 - (C) because she forgot to watch the video long ago
 - (D) because she forgot to return the video long ago
6. If a video at this store was marked for sale at \$8.00 but had an orange sticker, how much would it cost someone to buy it?
 - (A) \$8.00
 - (B) \$6.00
 - (C) \$4.00
 - (D) It would be complimentary.